

Meeting Minutes Downtown Commission



Location: WEBEX

Date: May 25, 2021

Time: 8:30am

Commissioners Present: Steve Wittmann (Chair), Mike Lusk, Jana Maniace, Tony Slanec,

Absent: Robert Loversidge, Tedd Hardesty

Staff Present: Luis Teba

Call to Order (8:35)

The Commission took a moment to honor Otto Beatty, who dedicated 18 years of service to the Downtown Commission. Otto passed away on May 14, 2021.

- Swear in Staff
- Introduction of Commissioners
- Overview of Hearing Format
- Public Forum

Rory McGuiness presented the proposed Arena District Dora (Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area).

- Slanec asked why the southeast corner of crew stadium is not within the DORA.
- McGuiness stated that the stadium intends to sell beverage in the plaza using their liquor permit. You can purchase a beverage there, but you cannot take them into a separately licensed facility.
- Slanec asked why it doesn't extend to the riverfront park.
- McGuiness replied that the park is not finished yet. The boundaries will change over time, and they anticipate them changing. From a boundary standpoint, this is what the city and the arena district felt comfortable with.
- Wittmann said he was worried that people would not know exactly where the boundaries are. The proposed layout seemed strained.
- McGuiness replied the Arena District Dora LLC will be working with the city to create demarcating signage. There will be around 40 signs around the perimeter.
- Maniace why the DORA wraps around the Astor Park office building but doesn't extend into the residential areas?
- McGuiness said they did that to balance the needs of the residents and the office tenants.

A. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Discussion: N/A

Motion: To approve the minutes as presented.

Motion by: Slanec/Maniace (4-0-0) **APPROVED.**

B. Continued Applications

1) DC_21-04-014

Columbus Crew Way

City of Columbus / Moody Nolan, Inc.

Request for Action

New Construction

Construction of a five story parking garage.

Discussion:

Greg Briya, Tony Roell, Brian Sell presented the proposal.

- Briya stated that the garage had 681 spaces, and that the mural is a placeholder.
- Maniace asked about the material called "Flex Façade". Is that for the mesh panel or perforated panel?
- Briya replied that the flex panel was for the art wall. They opened up the corner on the garage, and that is where the stretch flex fabric will be located.

- Maniace asked is that had any dimension to it.
- Briya said it was a flat surface. Like a canvas. This material has been used out by the airport. This mural would have some relation to the mural out front.
- Maniace said the garage was beautifully conceived. Since there are so many residences facing the courtyard, have they thought about varying the perforations, so that it isn't so stagnant? Something to give it visual interest. Is there a way to manipulate what you have, and give it that effect. It is a large expanse and a lot of people are going to have that view. Also, on the ground level, there is an opportunity for additional interest. Do you feel this is visually interesting enough?
- Briya said that they worked a few months now to put together what they felt was appropriate. The challenge is that this is Moody Nolan's courtyard, so we are missing large trees, and landscaping.
- Wittmann said the courtyard will only be open to the residents. It is Pizutti's apartment people's back yard.
- Sell said it was a great question. They looked at a lot of different ideas, such as large organic moves across the garage, but they landed on this simple backdrop. It is a fine pinstripe background, and will allow the site design to be a feature. We feel that all the energy will be on the ground plane, and then to simplify and make the garage a backdrop.
- Bryant said there will be a layer of landscaping masking that wall.
- Maniace replied that she respects what they did, and that they thought that through.
- Wittman asked that they return with the garage lighting.

Motion: To approve the proposal with the following conditions:

- They return with the lighting.
- Signage can be staff approved at a later date as long as it is similar to what is shown in the proposal.

Motion by: Lusk/Slanec (4-0-0) APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

2) **DC_21-04-010**

1 Riverside Plaza

American Electric Power Service Corporation / Jeffery Tomlinson

Request for Action

Signage or Graphics

Installation of a wall sign on a skywalk over West Spring Street.

Discussion:

Jeff Tomlinson and Michael Cox presented the proposal.

- Wittmann asked which supports were being added that didn't match the existing supports.
- Cox stated that it was the horizontal bar behind the word AMERICAN.
- Wittmann asked how bright it would be and if it will be illuminated during the day.
- Cox stated that it would not be. It will be turned on and off with the ambient lighting and the other lighting in the system.
- Maniace asked if it could be dimmed.
- Cox said they could add it.
- Wittmann stated that the commission had concerns about the brightness of graphics downtown.
- Cox said it was a complicated question, that it was related to the ambient lighting and its location.
- Maniace stated that she wanted to make sure the back of the signs looked finished.
- Cox said the wiring would be hidden, and the back would be painted to match the steel supports of the bridge.

Motion: To approve the proposal as presented.

Motion by: Slanec/Maniace (4-0-0) APPROVED

C. New Applications

1) **DC_21-05-017**

16 West Main Street

Main & High Cousins LLC / Schiff Properties c/o Scott Schiff

Request for Action

Demolition / Parking

Demolition of an existing structure and replacement with a parking lot.

Discussion:

Mike Shannon, Scott Schiff, Jared Schiff, and Joseph Lewis presented the proposal.

Amit Ghosh spoke on behalf of the city.

Becky west spoke on behalf of Columbus Landmarks.

- Shannon stated that the applicant would be willing to present a HABS report if the building was to come down.
- Wittmann asked why the applicant doesn't want to come in for demolition when they have the new building plans ready to go.
- Shannon stated that they felt the condition of the building warranted the demolition of the building for the health, safety, and welfare issues, as well as the economic hardship condition. He also stated that they could share the future plans for the site. In all his years doing demolitions, he has never seen a structural report shared with the chief building official.
- Wittman asked Ghosh why he asked for a 3rd party review.
- Ghosh said that what was surprising to him, was that we had no history of issues with this building. It is odd for a building to go from occupation by tenants to imminent danger of collapse. If there was a history of concerns it would be different, but there was only the recent report. He spoke to Mr. Lewis, and he indicated that he does not feel this building is in imminent danger of collapse. In his report, Mr. Lewis makes a two-step recommendation: they should recommend the barricading of the front of the building, and they should demolish the building. He is hopeful they get the peer review back, and that it matches Mr. Lewis' review.
- Wittman asked if that review is in process.
- Ghosh said it was and we should get it back shortly. We should have gotten it back already.
- West stated that every month creative developments are brought before the Commission. The demolition of this building is a step backward. It represents disinvestment downtown. There are 150 acres of surface lots downtown. They all represent a prime opportunity for infill, but for now they are dead zones. This building is a funky building that creates interest and diversity downtown. Until there is a real proposal for something besides surface parking, the demolition should not take place, and the owner should use their knowledge and experience to renovate this building.
- Schiff replied that if the commission wants to table this that is fine. But he would like the record to reflect that they are willing and able to remove this liability in ten days.
- Maniace asked how they realized they needed to vacate the building.
- Schiff replied that it came to their attention when they applied for a demolition permit. They had assembled the parcel pieces over the years. He walks by it every day 5-6 times, and he would see pieces of the building lying on the ground. The parking lot is uneven, and they want to remove the building and level the lot until it is ready for development.
- Maniace asked if they vacated the building when they realized it was a risk.
- Lewis stated that his initial report was April 7th, and April 19th was his final report. In his initial draft, he said that the building is bowing, and the façade is in danger of collapse. The structural integrity was such that the building would require rebuilding of the brick, and the building should be demolished.
- Lusk asked if provisions had been made to block off the sidewalk.
- Wittmann said the Commission could table the proposal for one month.
- Schiff said they want to do the right thing.

- Maniace said she would be comfortable waiting for the third party as long as the sidewalk is cordoned off. The third party report needs to get back to the commission as soon as possible.

Motion: To table the proposal.

- **The sidewalk be cordoned off.**
- **The third party report needs to get back to the Commission as soon as possible.**

Motion by: Maniace/Slanec (4-0-0) TABLED.

D. Conceptual Applications

1) **DC_21-05-016**

Five locations in the public right-of-way
City of Columbus / Mark Klingler, Capital Crossroads SID
Conceptual Review

New Construction

Installation of public restrooms.

Discussion:

Mark Klingler and Lisa Defendieffer presented the proposal.

- Maniace asked if the lack of a urinal will cause issues with people not picking up the lid.
- Klingler said that he hadn't heard many complaints about that issue. They will be cleaned three times a day, so hopefully that would address that problem.
- Maniace asked if they would be open 24 hours a day.
- Klingler said that they would be. If they have issues, they can always begin to lock them.
- Maniace asked if there had been any issues with muggings.
- Klingler said that with the open design, people should be able to hear any issues. Problems always do come up, but most cities have had nothing but positive responses. He added that if there have been issues, it is usually related to where they were located.
- Slanec asked if there were emergency call buttons inside them.
- Klingler replied that there were not. He asked, but the company has not done that before. They could most likely be added retroactively.
- Slanec asked if the SID would pay for the maintenance.
- Klingler replied that the city and the county will help fund the maintenance. It would be through a third party contract, most likely Capital Crossroads.
- Slanec asked if it would be possible to do a pilot location, and see how it works.
- Klingler said that they have done portable toilets over the last couple months, and it has been very successful. He felt that sort of worked as a test pilot. There is also the funding available now, which they would lose, and there is an economy of scale by installing them all at once.
- Wittmann asked where those portable toilets were located.
- Klingler replied that two are located at Broad and High near Cota. Two near Long and High. Two near the open shelter on Mound Street. One near the Trinity Church.
- Maniace said she would like to see them rendered at the actual site locations, to make sure they look attractive.
- Wittman asked if the adjacent property owners have a say with regards to their location.
- Klingler said they will have conversations in the next several weeks with property owners. And they will take the owners point of view into account.
- Wittmann asked if they planned on placing them where the SID had existing problems.
- Defendieffer said cleaning in the public realm is one of the SID's jobs. There are locations with a lot of urine and defecation. They were struck at the location along the YMCA, where people were using the landscaping as bathrooms. There just aren't enough restrooms for the general public.
- Wittmann asked if the people using the bushes will feel comfortable using the bathrooms.

- Defendieffer said that she feels that this will address a large portion of the problem. This will also serve the public at large. There will still most likely be issues, but it should improve the issue.
- Lusk asked if they would be heated. He is concerned that people may try to sleep in them.
- Klingler said they would not be, so it would be uncomfortable to sleep in them.
- Defendieffer said they provide safety services downtown, so they will be providing for safety around them.

Motion: N/A

Motion by: N/A

E. Applications for Recommendations

1) **DC 21-05-019**

Columbus Crew Way

City of Columbus / Moody Nolan, Inc.

Request for Action

New Construction

Construction of a new road.

Discussion:

Luis Teba presented the proposal.

- Maniace asked if there would be additional lighting besides the string lighting.
- Teba said he was unsure, but he would check with the applicant and get the information back to the commission.

Motion: To provide a recommendation of support to the Department of Public Service.

Motion by: Wittmann/Slanec (4-0-0) SUPPORT.

F. Staff Approved Applications

1) **DC_21-05-001**

110 North Third Street

Kevin Wood / Orange Barrel Media LLC

Ad-Mural

2) **DC_21-05-002**

255 East Long Street

Coastal Ridge Real Estate / DaNitesign, Jennifer Bender

Projecting Sign

3) **DC_21-05-003**

200 East Town Street

Ohio Association of Realtors Inc. / Morrison Sign Co.

Canopy Sign

4) **DC_21-05-004**

60 East Spring Street

JDS Spring LLC / Orange Barrel Media LLC

Ad-Mural

5) **DC_21-05-005**

145 North High Street

Brunson Building LLC / Orange Barrel Media LLC

Ad-Mural

- 6) **DC_21-05-006**
100 East Gay Street
Caplin Enterprises LLC / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 7) **DC_21-05-007**
89 North High Street
Edwards Companies / Marano Design Group
Sidewalk Dining
- 8) **DC_21-05-008**
285 North Front Street
Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company / Orange Barrel Media LLC.
Ad-Mural
- 9) **DC_21-05-009**
367 East Broad Street
Wahida Fowler / Campus-Seneca LLC
Canopy Sign
- 10) **DC_21-05-010**
66 South Third Street
Capital Square Ltd. / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 11) **DC_21-05-011**
345 South High Street
Franklin County Ohio Board of Commissioners / CJ Andrews
New egress stair
- 12) **DC_21-05-012**
260 South Fourth Street
Stoddart Block LP / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 13) **DC_21-05-013**
350 North Fourth Street
Abbot Manufacturing Inc. / Don Holler
Temporary Banner
- 14) **DC_21-05-014**
34 North High Street (north elevation)
34 Corp / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 15) **DC_21-05-015**
20 East Broad Street
Hayden Columbus LLC / Pete Hatcher
Wall Sign
- 16) **DC_21-05-018**
535 Reach Boulevard
WC Goodale OB2, LLC / John Lytle, Archall
Exterior Material Revision

- 17) **A19-10-7 (re-issue)**
33 West Spring Street
COTA / TranSystems Corporation
Exterior Building Alterations – window modifications
- 18) **DC_21-05-020**
65 South Fourth Street
YWCA / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 19) **DC_21-05-021**
34 North High Street (south elevation)
34 Corp / Orange Barrel Media LLC
Ad-Mural
- 20) **DC_21-05-022**
35 West Spring Street
ARC Hospitality c/o Courtyard Marriott / Lamar Advertising Co.
Ad-Mural
- 21) **DC_21-05-023**
302 West Spruce Street
MND LLC / Sprint
Antenna modification

G. New Business

- 1) **N/A**

H. Old Business

- 1) **Lighting Standards Research**
- 2) **Private Art visible to the public review proposal.**
Luis Teba gave an update of both proposals.
 - Wittman asked if the Commissioners felt they should review private art.
 - Slanec said he felt we needed a very good definition of private art and content, because if we don't we are going to be riding the line all the time. And it could get complicated.
 - Teba said we have good definitions of private art and graphics. Our issue is that we can't discuss the content of private art, as that is protected speech. It could turn into a minefield.
 - Maniace stated that she felt we could focus on the placement and size, and not the content in general.
 - Teba replied that would be similar to the review of ad-murals. However, all of our COA's are associated with a permit, and private art is not related to a permit. We would have to figure out if we can make that change legally.

I. Adjournment 10:45am

Applicants or their representatives must attend this hearing, for new and continued applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. If applicants are absent it is likely that the application will be continued until the Commission's next hearing. Meeting Accommodations: It is the policy of the City of Columbus that all City-sponsored public meetings and events are accessible to people with disabilities. If you need assistance in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the City's ADA Coordinator at (614) 645-8871, or email zdjones@columbus.gov, at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled meeting or event to request an accommodation.